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Agricultural Marketing Service



Federal Grain Inspection Service



ACTION BY: All Divisions and Offices, AMS, FGIS, and OT

Establishing, Closing, or Relocating Field Offices

I PURPOSE

This Instruction:

A States the policy and criteria for selecting locations for offices, laboratories, and other facilities.

B Requires that prior approval be obtained to establish, close, convert, expand, or relocate an office, laboratory, or other facility, and outlines the procedures for obtaining such approval.

II POLICY

A Department Policy. All Department offices and facilities must be located in accordance with the objectives stated in the Administrative Regulations of the Department (1 AR 673). Exhibit A, attached, contains a copy of the Department Regulations.

B Agency Policy. It is Agency policy to:

1 Locate offices in the same building with other Department offices to the maximum extent possible consistent with program objectives.

2 Initiate action to acquire real property or improve private property only when needed for effective program administration, and when suitable Government-owned facilities are not available.

3 Provide employees with safe and healthful conditions of employment.

4 Assure equal housing opportunity for all employees affected by establishing, expanding, closing, or relocating an office.

5 Provide office space that is energy efficient.

6 Provide office space that is accessible to handicapped persons, if appropriate.

DISTRIBUTION:
A,M,O,S,P,F,T

MANUAL MAINTENANCE INSTRUCTIONS:
Revised to update. Remove AMS/FGIS
Instruction 105-1, dated 8-12-77.
File this revision.

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6-11-80

III OBTAINING APPROVAL TO ESTABLISH, CLOSE, OR RELOCATE A FIELD OFFICE

A Form To Be Used. Form AMS-6 (Revised 5-80), Request To Establish, Close, or Relocate Field Office, shall be used to request establishing, closing, or relocating of a field office (including relocation within a city or town), or converting of an existing permanent office to a seasonal office. The format of Form AMS-6 is illustrated in Exhibit B, attached.

B Requirements for Submitting Form AMS-6.

1 When Required. Exhibit C, attached contains a listing of situations which require the submission of Form AMS-6.

2 When Not Required. AMS/FGIS and FGIS Instruction 106-2, Delegations of Administrative Authorities, redelegates to certain AMS, FGIS, and OT officials the authority to approve the opening or closing of a seasonal office. A Form AMS-6 is not required, but contact the Chief, Property and Procurement Branch, Administrative Services (AS) Division, before obtaining space for a seasonal office.

C Approvals of Form AMS-6. Form AMS-6 must be approved before any action is taken to establish, close, expand, or relocate an office. The AMS, FGIS, and OT officials required to approve Form AMS-6 are listed on the form (see Exhibit B, attached).

D Civil Rights Impact Statement. When Form AMS-6 is prepared the initiator shall give consideration to the need for a Civil Rights Impact Statement (see Secretary's Memorandum 1662, Supplement 8, Civil Rights Consideration of Policy Action).

E Department Approval. Proposals in the following categories are subject to Department approval:

1 Location in Other Than Rural Area. Permanent establishment in or relocation to other than a rural area of a facility involving 10 or more employees.

2 Fifty or More Employees. Establishment, relocation, or expansion of a facility resulting in assignment or reassignment of 50 or more employees.

3 Deconsolidation. Relocation of a facility resulting in deconsolidation of State- or county-level offices, regardless of the location selected or the number of employees involved.

4 Deviation From Standard Federal Regional Boundaries. Any deviation from the Standard Federal Regional Boundaries requires approval of the Office of Management and Budget. This approval requirement applies to any changes in an area previously established to be serviced by a field office.

IV RESPONSIBILITIES

A Officers in Charge and Field Office Supervisors shall:

1 Obtain approval through appropriate channels before planning an office move or taking any action to expand functions or to open, close, or relocate an office.

2 Notify the Director, AS Division, and the Chief, Property and Procurement Branch, AS Division, before making any contacts outside AMS or FGIS regarding space or services in connection with a move.

B Division and Regional Directors who propose the establishment, closing, expansion, conversion, or relocation of an office (except as authorized under Section III B 2 above) shall:

1 Prepare Form AMS-6, in original and 5 copies, in accordance with instructions on the Form. Attach copies of all related correspondence and other backup material needed for management review of the proposal.

2 Distribute copies of Form AMS-6 as follows:

a The originator will keep a file copy, and

b Route the remaining copies according to the routing shown on the form, so that the original and 4 copies will be delivered to the Director, AS Division, in the sequence shown on the form.

C The Director, AS Division, shall:

1 Request additional information from the initiating Division or Regional Director, if needed.

2 Forward Form AMS-6 to the officials indicated on the form in the order listed. Each of those officials shall review the proposal for compliance with Department and Agency policy, and shall make a determination concerning the advisability of the proposal.

3 For proposals which require Department approval, prepare the necessary correspondence for signature by the Administrator, AMS or FGIS, as required (see 1 AR 673, subparagraph h in Exhibit A, attached).

4 Provide liaison between AMS/FGIS/OT and the Office of Operations and Finance regarding actions which require Department approval.

5 Maintain the official AMS/FGIS/OT file of proposals to establish, close, expand, convert, or relocate offices.

6 Notify all parties concerned regarding final action on each proposal.

V NOTICE OF FINAL DECISION

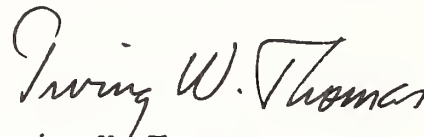
Following final action on the proposal, the Director, AS Division, shall:

A If approved, send copies of the approved Form AMS-6 to the initiating Division or Regional Director, the Chief, Property and Procurement Branch, AS Division, and each official who signed Form AMS-6.

B If disapproved, send an explanatory memorandum to the initiating Division or Regional Director. Send copies of the memorandum and the Form AMS-6 to the Chief, Property and Procurement Branch, AS Division, and each official who signed Form AMS-6.

VI WITHDRAWAL OF APPROVED FORM AMS-6 BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION

If an approved Form AMS-6 is to be withdrawn before implementation, the initiating Division or Regional Director shall document the reasons for the withdrawal, in memorandum form, and distribute the memorandum the same as original Form AMS-6 (see Section IV B 2, above).



Irving W. Thomas
Deputy Administrator, Management

Attachments

CHAPTER 11

1 AR 673

SECT. 1

CHAPTER 11 - FIELD OFFICES REVIEW

SECTION 1 - LOCATION OF OFFICES AND FACILITIES

673. LOCATION OF USDA FACILITIES. a. Background. Section 601 of the Rural Development Act of 1972 (86 Stat. 674) directs the Secretary to give first priority to the location of new offices and other facilities in rural areas as defined in the private business enterprise exception in Section 306(a)(7) of the Consolidated Farmers Home Administration Act of 1961, as amended by the Rural Development Act of 1972.

b. Policy. It is the policy of this Department when establishing or relocating facilities that facilities of the Department shall be located in rural areas unless there are overwhelming reasons for not doing so.

c. Definitions. For the purpose of this regulation, the following definitions apply:

(1) Rural Areas. A rural area is an area not within the outer boundary of a city having a population of 50,000 or more and its immediately adjacent urbanized and urbanizing areas with a population density of more than 100 persons per square mile according to the latest decennial census of the United States.

(2) Establishment of a Facility. Establishment of a facility means any action to acquire real property for the purpose of housing any activity where the assignment or relocation of personnel will be involved. Expansion of an existing facility is not included unless for the purpose of housing a program activity different from that currently conducted at the facility.

(3) Relocation of a Facility. Relocation of a facility means moving a facility from one site to another site in the same community or in a different community and includes the moving of an activity from another location to space available at a pre-existing facility.

d. Scope of Regulations. This regulation applies to all actions to establish or relocate facilities within the United States, the Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

e. Objectives. Consistent with this policy, it is the objective of Department policy to give express consideration to:

- (1) Efficient performance of the missions and programs of the Department;
- (2) Consolidation or common location of offices to enable economies through common services and to improve coordination with organizations of this and other Departments and with state and local governments.
- (3) The need for economic development and redevelopment of areas consistent with state, regional and local plans and programs, and the impact a selection will have on improving social and economic conditions in the area;
- (4) The availability of adequate low and moderate income housing;
- (5) The use of existing Government-owned permanent buildings and facilities which are adequate or economically adaptable to the efficient performance of agency programs.

f. Departmental Approval of Facility Location. Departmental approval is required for the establishment or relocation of a facility in the following situations:

- (1) Location In Other Than Rural Areas. Permanent establishment in or relocation to other than a rural area of a facility involving 10 or more employees. Temporary (one year or less) establishment or relocation of a facility does not require Departmental approval.
- (2) Fifty or More Employees. Wherever the establishment, relocation or expansion of a facility results in assignment or reassignment of 50 or more employees.
- (3) Deconsolidation. When the relocation of a facility will result in deconsolidation of state or county level offices, regardless of the location selected or the number of employees involved.

CHAPTER 11

1 AR 673

SECT. 1

g. Organizational Changes. Proposals for location of offices and facilities requiring approval under these regulations may also require approval of their organizational aspects as described in 5 AR 330. See 5 AR 331 for approval procedure for organizational changes involved.

h. Procedure for Approval of Facility Locations.

(1) Agency Submission.

(a) When Departmental approval is required hereunder, the Agency Head, prior to final approval by any Assistant Secretary, shall submit the original and four copies of the request to the Director, Office of Management and Finance. The items which are to be considered and covered by the facility location request are set out in Exhibit 1, 1 AR 673.

(b) Whenever possible, the location request should be submitted together with the material required under 5 AR 331 for any organizational aspects of the proposal. This will permit simultaneous review of both areas and expedite the review process.

(2) Departmental Review and Approval.

(a) The Office of Management and Finance will:

(1) Coordinate review of facility location requests within the Office of the Secretary and coordinate these reviews with related organization proposals submitted under 5 AR 331;

(2) Submit proposals to the appropriate Assistant Secretary for decision; and

(3) Notify agencies of action taken on facility location requests.

(b) The Office of Operations will:

(1) Review agency proposals for consistency with the requirements of the Rural Development Act and the policy objectives set forth in Section e (2)-(5) of this regulation; and

(2) Submit appropriate recommendations to the Office of Management and Finance for inclusion in the coordinated review.

(3) Special Joint Study. Special joint studies by Departmental and Agency personnel may be required if the request indicates that Agency's basic program delivery system or factors of significant public interest are involved.

i. Class Exceptions. Where overwhelming reasons exist to locate a class of offices or other facilities in nonrural areas, an exception from the Departmental Approval requirements of paragraph "f" above may be requested. Such requests shall set forth all pertinent information and be submitted in accordance with the procedures prescribed above.

j. Public Announcement. Agency and Department officials shall not make public announcements, initiate any moves, or make any similar commitment until approvals required by these regulations have been obtained.

k. Implementing Instructions. The Director, Office of Operations is responsible for implementation of these regulations.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE

REQUEST TO ESTABLISH, CLOSE, OR RELOCATE FIELD OFFICE

DISTRIBUTION: ORIGINAL AND 4 COPIES TO DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION. (THE DIRECTOR, ASD, WILL FORWARD 1 COPY TO PROPERTY AND PROCUREMENT BRANCH, AS DIVISION) . 1 COPY FOR FILE.

(Attach copies of correspondence and other backup material.)

DIVISION OR REGION	BRANCH	EFFECTIVE DATE
(CHECK ONE) <input type="checkbox"/> ESTABLISH OFFICE <input type="checkbox"/> CLOSE OFFICE		<input type="checkbox"/> RELOCATE OFFICE
ADDRESS		PRESENT ADDRESS
		PROPOSED ADDRESS

APPROVALS (Route in Order)

TITLE AND ORGANIZATION	FGIS	AMS AND OT	SIGNATURE	DATE
DIVISION DIRECTOR		X		
FIELD OFFICE SUPERVISOR	X			
REGIONAL DIRECTOR	X			
ASSISTANT DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR PROGRAM OPERATIONS (Field)	X			
DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION, AMS	X	X		
DIRECTOR, PERSONNEL DIVISION (Return to Director, ASD, AMS)	X	X		
DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT DIVISION (Return to Director, ASD, AMS)	X	X		
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COORDINATOR (Route to Deputy Administrator, Management, AMS)	X	X		
DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR, MANAGEMENT	X	X		
DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR, PROGRAM OPERATIONS	X	X		
ADMINISTRATOR, <input type="checkbox"/> AMS <input type="checkbox"/> FGIS <input type="checkbox"/> Director, OT (Return to Director, ASD, AMS)	X	X		

NOTICE OF FINAL DECISION TO: ☐ Division ☐ Property and Procurement Branch, ASD, AMS ☐ Approving Official
☐ Regional Director

JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

☐ YES ☐ NO

☐ YES ☐ NO

☐ YES ☐ NO

☐ YES ☐ NO

☐ YES ☐ NO

☐ YES ☐ NO

STAFFING PATTERN

PROPOSED:

(Include program needs, budget summary by object class, reasons for and benefits of this action, estimates of cost or cost reduction, explanation of above items, etc. Continue on separate sheet as necessary. See AMS/FGIS Instruction 105-1.)

Requirements for Submitting Form AMS-6, Request to
Establish, Close, or Relocate Field Office

Type of Action Contemplated	Area Desired			Number of Personnel Involved	Form AMS-6 Required		Civil Rights Impact Statement Required	Approval of Form AMS-6 Required By:		
	Rural	Urban	Any-Location		YES	NO		Admin, AMS or FGIS; or Director, OT	Department	Office of Mgmt. & Budget
ESTABLISH	X	X X	X	1-49 1-9 10-49 50 & Above	X X X X		1/ 1/ 1/ 1/	X X X X	2/ 2/ X X	
CLOSE (Seasonal) (Non-seasonal)			X X	Any Number Any Number	X	X	1/	X	2/	
EXPAND			X X	1-49 50 & Above	X X		1/ 1/	X X	2/ X	
RELOCATE (Anywhere Out of Same Bldg.) (In Same Bldg.)	X	X X	X X	1-49 1-9 10-49 50 & Above 1-49	X X X X	X	1/ 1/ 1/ 1/	X X X X	2/ 2/ X X	
CONVERT (Existing Permanent Office to Seasonal Office)			X	Any Number	X		1/	X	2/	
DECONSOLIDATE (Creating 2 Offices From 1 Office)			X	Any Number	X		1/	X	X	
DEVIATION (From Standard Federal Regional Boundaries)			X	Any Number	X		1/	X	X	X

1/ Initiator shall consider need for Civil Rights Impact Statement at time Form AMS-6 is prepared.

2/ When Agency determines Civil Rights Impact exists and statement to that effect is prepared, Department approval is required.

